The first place winning essay at the 2012-2013 Essay Competition organized by the Burmese American Community Institute.

The Importance of Volunteerism and Community Service By: Emily Ngunhlei Sung



As I was walking down the street, I saw students picking up trash and helping the people who needed help. Some gave food and clothing to the people who lived out on the street, and some were caroling to the older people. I was amazed by what I was seeing. Even though it was the coldest time of the year, they were out there cleaning the street, giving and helping people who needed help. They were having a good time while serving in the community and volunteering.

Volunteering and community service is the principle of donating time and energy for the benefit of other people in the community. Volunteering is a form of social responsibility rather than working for financial reward. It is important for many reasons. It does not only work for those receiving help, but also those who are volunteering. When someone is giving their precious time, it not only shapes a community for the better, it also improves the person who donates their time with a rewarding experience.

Volunteering and community service helps us to know different people. It helps us to keep peace and unity among ourselves, and it also brings people together to work on a goal. The Community life is improved by lending a helping hand to people that are in need. When a person donates their time for someone or something, they give hope to them and the cause. If someone doesn't have a place to live because of some financial problems or a tragedy, and a group of people hosted a benefit for him, that person faith would be revived when he realized that people care. Although that person doesn't have belongings, seeing how his own community wants to help would bring joy and show him that money isn't everything.

Volunteering along with community service does not only helps both parties involved. Volunteers get the benefit of seeing how their contributions have

made a difference in the lives of others. The experiences that they have had contributes to personal development, self-confidence, self-esteem and self-fulfillment. Other rewards volunteers may reap are far greater than any promotion they could get from work, or good grades they get at school. It could also provide some with a spiritual enhancement.

Lastly, the importance of Volunteering and community service is that they are involve in generously giving back to others. Also sharing in the good things they have received in life. It proves to those who need help and are in desperation, that all hope is not lost. It gives them hope in knowing that the world is still a beautiful place to live in. It's validating that no matter what kind of tragedy strikes, there will always be a silver lining to every rain cloud. We may even be instrumental in inspiring others to pick up their lives and start over. Perhaps also inspire others to volunteer their time, talent and resources.